

Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 180528

43

ORIGIN EB-07

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ACDA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NASA-01 NSC-05 OES-03 SS-15 PA-01 PRS-01

USIA-06 CCO-00 OTPE-00 FCC-01 OC-05 COME-00 BIB-01

IO-10 AF-06 ARA-06 EA-06 EUR-12 NEA-10 /115 R

66624

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY CARACAS

INFO USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 180528

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ETEL, CH, TW, VE

SUBJECT: ROC MEMBERSHIP IN INTELSAT

REF: STATE 18236, JAN. 28,1974, STATE 27085, FEB 9,1974
(NOTAL)

1. REPUBLIC OF CHINA HAS BEEN MEMBER IN GOOD STANDING
OF INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS SATELLITE
ORGANIZATION (INTELSAT) SINCE 1964. ROC HAS TWO EARTH
STATIONS ACCESSING INTELSAT SATELLITES, AND ROC TRAFFIC
ACCOUNTS FOR 1.13 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL UTILIZATION OF
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PAGE 02 STATE 180528

INTELSAT CAPACITY. IT IS THE SEVENTEENTH LARGEST USER
AMONG THE 91 MEMBER COUNTRIES.

2. AT LAST INTELSAT ASSEMBLY OF PARTIES MEETING, FEBRUARY
4-8, 1974, THERE WAS UNSUCCESSFUL EFFORT TO INSCRIBE ON

THE AGENDA AN ITEM WHICH WOULD HAVE PERMITTED CONSIDERATION OF THE REPRESENTATION OF CHINA ISSUE. WE ANTICIPATE THE ISSUE WILL BE RAISED AGAIN IN SOME FORM AT THE NEXT MEETING OF THE ASSEMBLY OF PARTIES WHICH WILL BE HELD IN NAIROBI IN SEPTEMBER 1976. AS OF NOW THE PRC HAS MADE NO APPLICATION FOR INTELSAT MEMBERSHIP, NOR IS THERE EVIDENCE THAT IT INTENDS TO SUBMIT MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION IN NEAR FUTURE. APPARENT RELUCTANCE MAY BE RELATED TO LIMITED VOICE PRC WOULD HAVE IN ORGANIZATION DUE TO FACT THAT MEMBERSHIP IN GOVERNING BODY, AND VOTE OF

MEMBERS THEREOF, IS PRIMARILY A FUNCTION OF COUNTRY'S UTILIZATION OF INTELSAT SPACE SEGMENT. ON BASIS OF CURRENT PRC INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS TRAFFIC PRC WOULD NOT BE MEMBER OF INTELSAT GOVERNING BODY, KNOWN AS BOARD OF GOVERNORS.

3. IN MARCH THIS YEAR, JOSE ALEGRETT, MINISTER COUNSELOR (COMMUNICATIONS) IN VENEZUELAN EMBASSY HERE, AND CHAIRMAN INTELSAT BOARD OF GOVERNORS FOR TWELVE MONTH PERIOD ENDING MAY 13, 1975, VISITED PEKING AS PART OF GOV TRADE MISSION. HE DID NOT REPRESENT INTELSAT ON THIS TRIP. HOWEVER, DURING VISIT, ACCORDING TO PRIVATE REPORT ALEGRETT GAVE U.S. REPRESENTATIVE ON INTELSAT BOARD OF GOVERNORS, HE DISCUSSED WITH PRC OFFICIALS CHINA'S USE OF AND INTEREST IN INTELSAT MEMBERSHIP, AND THE ROC'S MEMBERSHIP. IT IS NOT CERTAIN AT WHOSE INITIATIVE THESE MATTERS WERE RAISED, ALTHOUGH U.S. REPRESENTATIVE BELIEVES ALEGRETT RESPONSIBLE. ALEGRETT REPORTED THAT PRC OFFICIALS ARE NOT HAPPY WITH CONTINUED ROC MEMBERSHIP AND WANT ROC EXPELLED OR TO WITHDRAW VOLUNTARILY FROM ORGANIZATION. ALEGRETT SAID HE SUGGESTED TO THEM THAT THE ROC MIGHT BE PERSUADED TO WITHDRAW VOLUNARILY IF, IN TURN, THE PRC WERE TO IGNORE OR TURN ITS BACK ON ROC USE OF THE SATELLITE SYSTEM THROUGH THEIR USE OF THE TAIWAN EARTH
CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 STATE 180528

STATIONS. AT THE SAME TIME, THE PRC COULD OPERATE ITS OWN STATIONS AS WELL. (PRC HAS THREE EARTH STATIONS IN OPERATION ACCESSING INTELSAT SATELLITES.) ALEGRETT SAID HE SUGGESTED THIS ARRANGEMENT MIGHT LAST FIVE TO TEN YEARS, DURING WHICH PEKING AND TAIPEI WOULD WORK OUT DIFFICULTIES BETWEEN THEMSELVES. HE SAID PRC RESPONDED NEGATIVELY TO SUGGESTION. ALEGRETT RECEIVED IMPRESSION THAT MEMBERSHIP WAS NOT PRIORITY INTEREST TO PRC, BUT IF ONLY WAY TO OUST ROC WERE FOR PRC TO JOIN IT WOULD DO SO.

4. IN RECENT MONTHS ALEGRETT REPORTEDLY HAS BEEN ACTIVELY DISCUSSING CHINA PROBLEM WITH OTHER INTELSAT MEMBERS, PARTICULARLY LATIN AMERICA, AND HAS BEEN IN CONTACT WITH PRC LIAISON OFFICE HERE. (IT IS SAID HE HAS

WEEKLY LUNCH WITH LIAISON OFFICE PERSONNEL.) IT APPEARS THAT ALEGRETT IS MOTIVATED BY DESIRE TO BE HELPFUL IN BRINGING ABOUT ACCEPTABLE RESOLUTION TO PROBLEM, THUS AVOIDING CONFRONTATION AT 1976 ASSEMBLY OF PARTIES MEETING. DEPARTMENT HAS NO EVIDENCE HIS ACTIVITIES ARE AT INSTIGATION OF PRC. THUS HE APPEARS TO BE WELL-INTENTIONED AND HIS ACTIVITIES ARE IN KEEPING WITH ROLE HE PLAYED DURING NEGOTIATION OF INTELSAT DEFINITIVE AGREEMENTS WHERE HE WAS ARCHITECT OF MAJOR COMPROMISE. (HE WAS MEMBER GOV DELEGATION, AND FREQUENTLY GOV SPOKESMAN, AT 1969-1971 CONFERENCES WHICH CULMINATED IN INTELSAT DEFINITIVE AGREEMENTS.)

5. PRC MEMBERSHIP IN INTELSAT COULD PRESENT SERIOUS PROBLEM FOR ROC, IF PRC ATTEMPTED TO RESTRICT OR PREVENT ROC ACCESS TO INTELSAT SYSTEM, ROC RELIES VERY SUBSTANTIALLY ON ACCESS TO INTELSAT FACILITIES FOR ITS INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS. FUTHERMORE, IF SOME ARRANGEMENT INVOLVING CONTINUED ROC ACCESS IS NOT WORKED OUT THERE WOULD BE A SERIOUS COMMUNICATIONS PROBLEM FOR LARGE NUMBER AMERICAN AND OTHER FOREIGN FIRMS WHICH HAVE INVESTED IN AND DO BUSINESS ON TAIWAN. ROC OFFICIALS HAVE RAISED QUESTION OF INTELSAT MEMBERSHIP TWO OR THREE TIMES IN RECENT MONTHS WITH DEIARENT OFFICIALS. ALTHOUGH NEXT MEETING OF ASSEMBLY OF PARTIES IS SOME TIME OFF, DEPARTMENT BELIEVES IT CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 STATE 180528

IS IMPORTANT THAT WE BEGIN NOW TO EXAMINE COURSES OF ACTION ON MEMBERSHIP ISSUE AND MEANS FOR INSURING CONTINUED ROC ACCESS TO INTELSAT SYSTEM AS PART OF RESOLUTION OF MEMBERSHIP ISSUE. NEXT LOGICAL STEP WOULD APPEAR TO BE THAT DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS HAVE QUIET EXCHANGE OF VIEWS WITH ALEGRETT, BUT BEFORE DOING SO, DEPARTMENT WOULD APPRECIATE VIEWS OF EMBASSY CARACAS REGARDING BASIS OF ALEGRETT'S CONSIDERABLE INTEREST IN SUBJECT. IT IS QUITE POSSIBLE HE IS ACTING ON HIS OWN INITIATIVE; BUT PERHAPS HE IS ALSO UNDER SOME INSTRUCTION FROM CARACAS IN VIEW OF HIS MEMBERSHIP ON GOV TRADE MISSION. WOULD APPRECIATE EMBASSY'S COMMENTS. INGERSOLL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 26 AUG 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MEMBERSHIP, COMMUNICATION SATELLITES, INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 31 JUL 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE180528
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter:
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: 11652 GDS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: D750264-0360
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t197507107/baaaaqtc.tel
Line Count: 154
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN EB
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <10 JUL 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <13 NOV 2003 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: n/a
TAGS: ETEL, CH, TW, VE, INTELSAT
To: CARACAS INFO PEKING
TAIPEI
HONG KONG
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006